

a "practitioner," the doctor was summoned. The doctor was informed immediately upon his arrival that he was really the second choice and the lady told of her pet bull terrier which had been taken with distemper and given up to die by a leading veterinarian. In despair the lady called up a prominent "practitioner," whose writings by the way are often in the newspapers, and the dog was healed at once by a single absent treatment. Why not, therefore, change the definition of disease to "a mistake of the human or the canine mind"? And if canines can be slipped into the category, why not include all animals, and then all thinking things, and, rather than run afoul of modern biology, all things that show life? But if disease is to be limited to the thinking creature, how about disease in the insane or the idiotic or imbecile? Disease, one would think, must presuppose a mind. And without mind there could not be disease. Therefore to be without disease, one should first be without a mind. Perhaps this may be true, on a Christian Science basis. However, we prefer our science to be logical and to be based on something of reasonable scientific fact.

Another statement of the writer quoted above also meets with our approval. He is somewhat late in discovering it, to be sure, as it was written into medical and biological science some time ago and has been lately demonstrated in the laboratory (a vivisection laboratory, by the way) by Cannon and others. Says he: "It is very plain to the student of Christian Science that the direct effects of wrong thinking upon the body, such as the indulgence of malice, anger, hatred and revenge, cannot be healed either by drug or knife." "Drugging the poor innocent body to correct the effects of sinful thought is little else than trying to erase a shadow on the wall, without interfering with that which is responsible for the shadow." If there is no matter, how can there be a shadow? If the body is unsubstantial, so are the drugs, and where are we the worse off? By Christian Science reasoning, it would strike the impartial observer that drugs through their unsubstantial action on the unsubstantial body, might be expected to cause mental purgation, and emesis and all the other actions sometimes accredited to drugs. We find ourselves thus in the position of having proved some time ago what Christian Science now announces as a new discovery, and of rather refusing to follow logical Christian Science reasoning as applied to the metaphysical action of drugs.

Enough has been said to show that the basis of reasoning in this system is destroyed by its own reasoning, if it be logical, and that to apply the name "science" to such inconsistencies is most unscientific.

VENEREAL DISEASE AND THE ARMY.

Information recently received by the Bureau of Venereal Diseases of the State Board of Health shows that during the twelve weeks ending December 7, 1917, 21,742 new cases of venereal disease were reported from thirty-one cantonments. The incapacitation of these men involves not only loss of time. It has cost the government to keep them during the period of hospital confinement (varying

from one to eight weeks), more money than is required to maintain the entire command at Camp Dix in New Jersey with 20,859 men, plus an additional sum for medical treatment. In hundreds of these cases the disease will relapse, in many instances, after the men have arrived in France and have presumably been put in condition for active service at the front, at a cost to the government of about \$1500 for each man.

A large proportion of these cases of venereal disease originate, not in the camp or in communities surrounding the camp, but in cities and towns from which the men come and through which they pass en route to the camps. This statement is clearly proved by reports from the Surgeon-General's office. The enormous monetary cost due to venereal disease is thus due largely to conditions in civil life.

These facts show clearly the urgent need for an organized simultaneous attack by all states on venereal disease. When only a few states deal with the problem, and some of these but spasmodically, the result is only to drive the chief carriers, the prostitutes, from one state to another. State Boards of Health in each state should enlist the active co-operation of governors, mayors, chiefs of police, police judges, district and city attorneys, hospital superintendents, and educators, in an organized and general attack on venereal disease.

The special article in this issue by Dr. Sperry, on the campaign of the San Francisco Board of Health against venereal disease, is worthy of careful study. Such a campaign, related to and co-operating with the venereal disease bureau of the state Board of Health, is needed in every city of California where there is possibility of dissemination of venereal disease. Along with these campaigns, there is urgent need that the medical profession, as a whole, cease its indifference and *laissez faire* attitude toward this problem. Flippancy and cynical discussion are too often heard when the question of venereal disease is presented before medical societies. Both are in extremely bad taste and are neither rational at the present day nor patriotic. Let us have no more of them. That doctor who considers the entire subject a joke, is not fit to be a doctor. That doctor who is not a supporter of the government's policy of absolute repression of prostitution as the best solution of the question, so far as it affects carriers, is not conversant with present day sociological returns and needs to do some serious study of present day conditions. The medical profession should be in the front rank of the attack on venereal disease, both in its organized public capacity, and even more importantly in its individual relations to this great problem.

ALARMS AND RUMORS.

From time to time we hear that some member of our organization, who has been unfortunate enough to be sued for some alleged act of unskillfulness or neglectful omission, has suffered grievously at the hands of our organization. The story runs that the Secretary's office was indifferent or careless, or that our legal staff was ineffective and failed to respond to his dire need; or the yarn

may be that our finances are impaired, that members are not keeping up their dues, and more and much more of the same. Prefacing the statement "I heard" or "they say," our informant retails the depressing information.

May we without offense say to our members that the circulation of such alarms and rumors is opposed to the Society's best interests? It is, we believe, instituted by those who are opposed to the Society and who are wholly outside of the Society. There are evidences that a well-conducted and carefully planned campaign has been going on for some time. It is not instigated or maintained by any member of the Society, but members of the Society can aid it by lending unconscious assistance to the circulation of such statements. Such matters are calculated to disintegrate the Society's organization, to instill doubt and foreboding in the mind of every member as to the strength of the Society's organization, and particularly as to the efficacy of the legal defense measures used by the Society and its legal department.

The point is this: When you hear or see any statement, oral or written, critical or derogatory of your own officers and representatives, do not circulate it, but take it up, either by seeing or writing to the officer or representative criticized, and if not satisfied with his statement then take it to the Councillor for your district and ask him to look into the matter for you.

We scarcely think it necessary for us to say that there is not a particle of truth in such statements. Our organization was never in better condition. Our membership roll, taking the war into consideration, shows a healthy total. Our finances are in sound condition—our books are kept under the eye of a firm of certified public accountants. The report of our legal department for 1917 discloses nothing but an unbroken line of successful efforts for our members.

So we say, criticize your officers and representatives—yes, but do so on facts known to you, and then go to some one in authority. Make your officers and representatives suggestions, they like to get them; but don't aid in the spreading of any rumor designed to disintegrate or weaken our splendid organization—and that, in the possible and probable interest of influences desiring such a result.

MEDICAL MOBILIZATION.

Until the entire medical profession of the United States, so far as its members are mentally and physically fit and within the age limit, is mobilized in the Medical Reserve Corps of the Army, we cannot say that we have done our utmost as a profession in the German war. You may never be called, at the same time your joining the Medical Reserve Corps and placing your services at the command of your country, clearly indicates the patriotism which the medical profession, as a whole, should evince and which we must manifest if we are to win the war.

Every doctor must realize that success depends upon a carefully selected and thoroughly trained body of medical officers. By careful selection, we

mean the placing of a medical officer in the position for which he is best fitted. Only by having the entire profession mobilized on a war basis, can we serve our country to the best possible advantage. This mobilization of the entire profession should come from within, but every physician coming within the requirements of the service, as to age and physical fitness, should seriously consider this suggestion and not wait for complete mobilization, but should apply at once for a commission in the Medical Reserve Corps of the Army.

It is not only for the combatant forces that medical officers are required but for sanitation, hospital camps, cantonments and in other departments where the health and life of the forces are dependent upon the medical officer. We have within the profession a sufficient number of doctors to fully meet the requirements of the Surgeon General's Office whatever they might be, but to be of service, you must join the Medical Reserve Corps to enable you to meet the appeal which is now being made for a large and efficient Medical Reserve Corps upon which the Surgeon General may draw as requirements demand.

WAR CLASSIFICATION OF MEDICAL COLLEGES.

Attention was called recently (Dec., 1917) to the situation arising in the College of Physicians and Surgeons in San Francisco, due to the fact that while this institution was accredited by the California State Board of Medical Examiners, it had failed to receive recognition from the War Department whereby its graduates could directly qualify for commissions in the medical corps of the Army, or its undergraduates be given recognition as medical students under the draft law. Inasmuch as the Class C. rating of this college has recently been confirmed by the Council on Education of the A. M. A., and inasmuch as the Army has not altered its dictum regarding recognition, there seems but one logical course for the State Board of Medical Examiners to pursue, under present war conditions, and for the best interests of the Army and of the students here enrolled. Certainly for the duration of the war the government minimum requirements of medical education should obtain for all colleges accredited by the State Board. As a war measure, no lower standard should be allowed. The demand of the Army for properly trained doctors should not lead to a lowering of the standard of medical education, but should be a powerful and patriotic motive for raising it.

NAVY NEEDS MEDICAL OFFICERS.

Considerable uncertainty appears to exist as to the status of the enrollment in the Naval Reserve Force, of registrants under the Selective Draft Law, since December 15, 1917. The following is quoted from the Selective Service Regulations operative from that date:

"(C) Any registrant at any time, regardless of classification and order number, may be commissioned in the Army, Navy, or Marine Corps, and thereafter, on presentation by the registrant to his local Board of a certificate of his Commanding Officer stating that he has been so commissioned,